NPS Form 10-900

OMB No. 10024-0018

(Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Lebanon Woolen Mills

other names/site number Tennessee Woolen Mills; The Mill at Lebanon

2. Location

street & number 218 N. Maple Street ☐ NA ☐ not for publication

city or town Lebanon ☐ NA ☐ vicinity

state Tennessee code TN county Wilson code 189 zip code 37087

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☐ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☒ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

- ☐ entered in the National Register.
  - ☐ See continuation sheet
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register.
  - ☐ See continuation sheet
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
- ☐ removed from the National Register.
- ☐ other, (explain:) _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
- ☐ public-local
- ☐ public-State
- ☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
- ☐ district
- ☐ site
- ☐ structure
- ☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	1	buildings
		sites
2		structures
		objects
5	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY: manufacturing facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Restaurant;
Specialty store
RECREATION/CULTURE: Parties, receptions
WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: industrial
COLONIAL REVIVAL

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick, Limestone, Concrete
walls Brick, Wood, Metal, Concrete Block
roof Built-up, Asphalt Shingle, Metal
other Wood, Glass, Concrete, Metal, Ceramic Tile

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheets.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY
ARCHITECTURE
OTHER: Labor History

Period of Significance
1909-1957

Criteria Considerations NA
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or grave

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Significant Dates
1909, 1929, 1941, 1947, 1955, 1958—major building phases

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Cultural Affiliation
NA

Architect/Builder
Office: Warfield, Francis B. and Associates/Chenault, H.L. and Son; multiple; unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☒ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ Previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State Agency
☐ Federal Agency
☐ Local Government
☒ University
☐ Other

Name of repository:
MTSU Department of History,
MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

Lebanon Woolen Mills
Name of Property

Wilson County, Tennessee
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approx. 11 acres Lebanon 314 NE

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	563358	4007585	3	16	563617	4007190
2	16	563668	4007561	4	16	563333	4007251

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth H. Moore, Heather Bailey; Previous draft completed by D. Lorne McWatters, Gena J. Gilliam, Maggie A. Miller
organization Center for Historic Preservation, MTSU date February 2007
street & number P.O. Box 80, MTSU telephone 615-898-2947
city or town Murfreesboro state TN zip code 37132

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Great Space LLC, et al; Theater Space (Contact: Curt Gibbs, 300 N. Maple St., Lebanon, TN 37087)
street & number 203 Lewisburg Ave telephone 615-390-4553
city or town Franklin state TN zip code 37064

Note: Most of the nomination is a revised version of a nomination completed by Lorne McWatters and his students at MTSU in 2002.

7. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Lebanon Woolen Mills is located at 218 North Maple Street, two blocks north of West Main Street (US Highway 70), in Lebanon, Wilson County, Tennessee. The mill's owners chose this site in 1908 to take advantage of the recent construction of the Tennessee and Chattanooga Railroad through downtown Lebanon. The main mill section of the today's sprawling brick and frame structure was built in 1909, with substantial additions made through 1972. The approximate size of the mill today is over 215,000 square feet spread mostly on the ground level, but including about 70,000 square feet on the second and third levels. From the outset, the main purpose of the mill was blanket production, using local wool until 1953, when the mill changed to acrylic fibers. After a period of instability in the 1970s and 1980s, the mill lost local control when it was sold to Pillowtex Corporation in 1993. Due to financial difficulties brought about by a changing global economy and the transfer of cloth production to mills in Mexico and Asia, the mill closed in 1998. The building's current owner purchased the property in 2005 and is adapting the complex into a mixed-use retail/restaurant/entertainment/residential/office project called "The Mill at Lebanon," while preserving as much of the historic fabric as possible.

The complex is composed of four freestanding resources oriented east toward North Maple Street: 1) the contributing L-shaped mill building; 2) a contributing c. 1941 coal storage building; 3) a contributing 1947 office building; and 4) a non-contributing 1961 blanket storage building currently used as a gymnastics studio. The earliest portion of the mill building dates to 1909 with several major additions in the 1920s, 1940s, and 1950s. The mill continued to grow with further additions in the 1960s and 1970s. Although some of these additions occurred outside of the period of significance, the major portions of the structure retain a high degree of integrity of materials and design. These additions are sympathetic to the industrial character of the structure and do not detract from the architectural or historic significance of the property. The mill building, coal storage building, office, and blanket storage building, are representative of a large industrial complex that was once a very active and important piece of the city of Lebanon. Surrounding the property is a residential area that once housed many of the mill workers. The mill is bounded on the south and west by Sinking Creek and the extant Tennessee Central Railroad tracks; on the east by North Maple Street; and on the north by adjacent residential lots. The complex as a whole maintains a high degree of integrity of location, materials, setting, and association.

1. Mill Building (1909, 1920, 1929, c. 1941, c. 1955, c. 1958, c. 1962, c. 1972, contributing building)
The mill building is composed of nine sections (labeled A-I on mill building plan) built between 1909 and 1972. Connected either externally or internally, these sections are being nominated as a single contributing resource. The mill building forms an L-shape and is oriented eastward toward North Maple Street. The original portions of the building are at the southwest corner of the “L” and later additions extend north and east to form a larger “L.” Founding the mill in December 1908, the mill's owners, including Dr. Howard K. Edgerton, Sr., broke ground for a small textile mill planned to open in 1910 with approximately forty workers. The 1909 mill included two large, partially connected brick buildings (portions of sections A, B, and C), with a total of 44,336 square feet. These sections of the original structure are fairly typical of industrial mill architecture in the early twentieth century with a low-pitched gable roof and large, multi-light metal industrial

windows, and brick walls. Additions throughout the twentieth century, creating the now 215,000 square-foot complex, follow these same trends in industrial architecture and allowed for increased productivity of the mill operation.

EXTERIOR

Main North and East Elevations

The main elevations of the mill building are oriented toward the east and north and form the interior of the "L" shape. The main eastern elevation along the interior of the "L" is composed of four sections from four separate building periods. The southernmost section dates to 1920 and is the eastern elevation of Section 1C on the site plan. It is composed of brick with a brick foundation. This portion of the building is two stories with a brick parapet topped with tile coping. The three bays each contain a single one-over-one replacement metal-and-glass window in the first floor. The window surrounds are original and are topped by segmental arches composed of brick voussoirs with three rows of brick headers.

North of this section on the east elevation is a brick c. 1958 section with a brick foundation and a flat roof that makes up half of Section 1A on the site plan. This two-story section contains six bays and was added between c. 1955-c. 1958, as a c. 1955 aerial photograph shows the section under construction and a c. 1958 photographs show it complete. The southern four bays have a pair of twelve-light metal industrial windows on both floors. The fifth bay has an identical pair of windows in the upper level and a replacement metal-and-glass door in the lower level. The northern bay has a single twelve-light metal industrial window on each level.

The third section from the south on this elevation is brick with a brick foundation and a flat roof. It dates to c. 1972 and makes up the northern part of Section 1A on the site plan. This two-story section is composed of ten bays, each with pair of twelve-light metal industrial windows on both floors that are identical to those in the previous section. The second bay from the north contains a set of replacement, metal-and-glass double entrance doors. A modern two-story, freestanding, entrance portico supported by a metal frame shelters the entrance, but does not touch the building.

The one-story northernmost section (Section 1I on site plan) on this elevation dates to c. 1972 and is a wood frame structure covered with metal panels with a poured concrete foundation and a flat roof. Two awnings are located on this elevation, but the walls are blank.

The northern elevation of the interior of the "L" is composed of three sections. The westernmost section is a gable-front, two-and-one-half story, brick structure with a brick foundation (Section 1C on site plan) that dates to 1909. The entrance is located in the middle bay of the first floor. The original wood door contains two wood panels in the lower half and six lights in the upper half. The door has a heavy Colonial Revival wood door surround with pilasters flanking the entrance. The remaining bays of the three-bay section each contain a single multi-light window on the first and second floors. Each of these windows is covered with wood shutters. Five windows in the attic level have been filled in with concrete blocks. A one-story, flat-roof porch (date unknown) supported on a wrought-iron frame shelters the two easternmost bays of this section and extends into the westernmost bay of the next section.

East of this section is a 1929 three-story, eight-bay, brick structure with a brick foundation and a flat roof (Section 1D on site plan). Tile coping lines the flat roofline. The entrance is located in the westernmost bay of the first floor and contains a wood door with two panels in the lower half and six lights in the upper half. A heavy Colonial Revival surround similar to that in the previous section frames the entrance. The wrought-iron porch extends from the previous section to cover this entrance. The remaining seven bays on the first level each contain a replacement single four-over-four, double-hung, wood window. The eight bays of the upper two levels each contain a single original metal six-light pivoted window with a three-light transom.

The easternmost section of this northern elevation makes up Section 1H on the site plan and dates to 1972. This two-story structure is brick with a brick foundation and tile coping along the flat roofline. Each bay of the second floor contains a four-light industrial window. The walls of the lower level are blank.

North Maple Street East Elevation

The eastern elevation that fronts North Maple Street is primarily for loading and unloading. The two-story northernmost section (Section 1H) dates to c. 1972 and contains five bays. In the northern bay, metal stairs lead up to a double-door, metal-and-glass entrance. A shed roof shelters the entrance. The middle three bays on the upper level contain four-light industrial windows identical to those on the northern elevation of this section. The lower level contains a single wood loading door in the center of the elevation. The southernmost bay is one-story with double wood loading doors. A poured concrete loading dock sheltered with a metal cover fronts the southern four bays of this elevation. Tile coping runs along the flat roofline.

Section 1G on the site plan projects from Section 1H on this elevation. This is a c. 1962 metal building with a poured-concrete foundation. The northern half of this section is covered with a front-gable roof while the southern half has a flat roof. The northern elevation that projects from Section 1H is a blank wall. The eastern elevation contains four bays of metal garage doors. The southern elevation contains a replacement metal-and-glass, double entrance door. Flanking this entrance are two boarded entrances.

Also visible on the southern elevation from North Maple Street is the 1941 brick wall of Section 1E. A single window has been covered on this elevation. A portion of the c. 1972 eastern elevation of Section 1F is also visible from North Maple Street and is composed of a brick wall with rectangular metal vents and tile coping along the flat roofline. A loading dock is recessed into this elevation. Both Section 1E and Section 1F are set behind a chain-link fence.

Other Elevations

The northern elevation of Section 1I is a one-story wood frame building covered in metal panels with a poured-concrete foundation. This section of the complex has a flat, raised-seam metal roof. The entrance is located near the western end of this elevation and contains two metal-and-glass double doors. A recent entrance portico shelters this entrance.

The rear, or west, elevation of Section 1I contains a single loading door toward the southern end. At the center of the west elevation is the c. 1955 brick, two story, rear addition to Section 1A. This portion of the elevation contains eleven bays. The northernmost bay contains a single twelve-light industrial window in each level. The third bay from the north contains a double, metal-and-glass c. 2000 replacement entrance door. Paired twelve-light metal industrial windows are located in each of the remaining bays. Six of these

windows were replaced c. 2000 to match the original windows. Also visible from this elevation are two replacement skylights to the interior of the c. 1909 portion of the main mill building.

Just south of the c. 1955 section is the 1909 30,000-gallon, sixty-foot brick water tower with arched window openings, brick sills, and corbelled cornice. The brick tower is three stories topped with a metal water tank.

South of the water tower is a c. 1941 rear addition on Section 1B. The lower brick level is composed of six bays with a single boarded window in each bay. The upper metal level is composed of five bays. The northern three bays contain double-hung wood windows in poor condition. At the southwest corner of the building, the elevation is recessed. An original set of paired 24-light industrial windows is located on the west elevation.

The south, north, and west elevations of Sections 1B, 1C, and 1F are visible from the alley/former rail spur. These sections are in structurally stable, but are in need of repair. They are made up of brick, concrete block and metal walls with industrial and double-hung windows. The brick south elevation of Section 1B retains three original 24-light industrial windows. The brick gabled south elevation of Section 1C contains original six-over-six double-hung wood windows, but some have been filled in with concrete block. The south elevation of Section 1D deteriorated beyond repair and is now an open-air space. The west elevation of Section 1H is concrete block and has a set of replacement, one-over-one, double-hung windows and a replacement door. The north elevation of Section 1F is concrete block, partially covered in metal sheets. Large loading doors are located along this elevation. The west elevation of Section 1F is concrete block and once consisted of ten two-over-two, double-hung wood windows. Five of these windows have been filled in with concrete block.

Also within the alley/former rail spur are two freestanding metal water towers. These water towers appear in a c. 1955 aerial photograph and thus date to one of the historic building phases of the mill. One of the towers is located in the recess between Sections 1B and 1C, the other is located along the western elevation of Section 1F. The two towers are identical, composed of a simple metal tank supported on a metal frame. Each cylindrical tank is capped with a low-pitched, metal, conical roof. Both water towers are contributing structures.

The south elevation of Section 1F is obscured by landscaping and is difficult to access. It is composed of concrete block with a minimal number of industrial and double-hung windows.

Although the mill building has undergone several additions throughout the twentieth century in order to expand mill operations, it retains the appearance of a large industrial complex and much of its historical character. Earlier sections of the mill building are visible within the “L” of the structure and a majority of the visible additions within this portion of the structure are sympathetic to and do not detract from the character of the building.

INTERIOR

Section 1A

Section 1A was constructed in five building phases. The original core of the section was constructed in 1909 and was a large rectangular space. In 1929, an addition was placed on the northern end of this

section. Circa 1955, a long rectangular addition was constructed across the west elevation. The current east elevation was added c. 1958 and c. 1972. Sanborn maps that date from 1913 to 1962 and a 1972 plan of the mill indicate that this section housed the weaving, carding, and spinning operations throughout the operation of the mill.

Two entrances from the east elevation lead into the c. 1958 and c. 1972 sections of the building that were originally utilized for baled stock (blankets). These portions of the building have been divided into ten separate retail/restaurant spaces that have concrete floors; dry-wall, concrete block, wood, and brick walls; and exposed structural ceilings with iron beams and second-floor wood floor joists visible. Six-light, fixed, wood interior windows have been added to these spaces during their conversion into retail/restaurant space.

West of these c. 1958 and c. 1972 additions is the 1909 and 1929 portion of this section that still retains much of its original material and form. The floors are poured concrete and the walls are brick. The ceilings have exposed wood rafters. Although all of the original windows were removed from Section 1A in the 1920s and 1930s, original window openings and brick segmental-arch lintels are still visible on the interior. Within these visible interior openings are replacement wood, nine-light, fixed windows and replacement wood twelve-light, double-leaf doors with four-light sidelights. The second floor is supported by twelve-by-twelve inch wooden posts, possibly added as early as 1920 and by iron I-beam posts added sometime later; the 1913 Sanborn map indicates that the original posts were nine-by-nine inch wood posts spaced fifteen feet apart.

North of the original 1909 section on the first floor is the c. 1955 west addition that forms two spaces, a single long room and a smaller room on the northern end. The new addition utilized metal posts and I-beams in its first floor construction. Six of the windows were replaced c. 2000 with the custom-made, 24-light, fixed metal windows. At the south end of the room can be seen one of the original, 8-light windows into the tower. The floors are poured concrete, the ceiling exposed rafters, and the walls brick. The c. 1909 brick tower is located adjacent to, but not accessible from, the western addition and the original workroom.

The second floor is accessed from stairs at the northeast corner of the 1929 section and from a set of c. 2000 open-air double stairs toward the southern end of the original 1909 section. The upstairs of the original portion of the mill is open in the middle, looking down into the original workspace. The original portion of the second floor was constructed of thick wood, tongue-and-groove planks placed tightly together to prevent the spread of fire. The floor of the second story also included two further layers of thinner tongue-and-groove flooring. The eastern addition of the second floor contains two large rooms and the western addition is composed of one large and four smaller spaces. These spaces have original twenty-four light industrial windows; brick, concrete block, and dry wall walls; and exposed-rafter ceilings. Between 1913 and 1920, three skylights were added to the original section and have recently been reopened. Circa 2000, part of the second story flooring in the 1909 section was removed in order to open the first floor to natural light from the skylights above. The resulting open space has been surrounded by a metal balustrade consistent with the industrial feel of the building.

Section 1A, along with Section 1B, are being renovated for use as entertainment, restaurant, and retail space.

Section 1B
Accessible from the south end of Section 1A, Section 1B was originally composed of six rooms, but is now roughly one large space. The original portion of the section, which stretched along the northern half, dates to 1909 and housed the wash and dry operations as well as the picker operations. South of this space were three original 1909 spaces, a pump room, a boiler room, and a dye room; at the southeast corner of this section was a c. 1941 space used as a paper room; and at the western end of the building was a c. 1941 rectangular room used for carbonizing. Recent alterations to this space converted these six rooms into a single open space. Waste from the dye room was dumped, undiluted, into Sinking (or Town) Creek, a waterway located immediately west and south of the main mill. The first floor of this section contains poured concrete floors and brick walls. The structural system of the ceiling is exposed with wood posts supporting iron and wood beams. The second floor has wood tongue-and-grove floors, brick walls, and an iron truss roof.

Section 1C
Accessible from the c. 1958 southeast addition to Section 1A, Section 1C is composed of a western 1920 section and c. 1941 napper room and the two-and-one-half story 1909 original gabled building that housed an office and binding operation on the first floor, and a warehouse on the second. A bridge once connected the second floor of the 1909 portion to the main mill structure (Section 1A); however, according to Sanborn maps, this bridge was removed by 1920 when the first napper room was added. The interior of this section displays heavy wood posts, a poured concrete floor, brick walls, and an original elevator at the south end. Heavy wood beams are exposed in the ceiling and beaded boards cover the rafters. The second floor of this space has square wood posts and wood beams, with a small room and scale at the northern end. Its upper floor is accessed currently by way of a stairway on the west side of the adjacent Section 1D or by the original elevator at the south end.

Section 1D
The second major addition made between 1920 and 1929 was a three-story office and storage section, Section 1D, attached to the east side of the original office/binding/warehouse structure, Section 1C. The interior of this space fell in due to deterioration and has recently been converted into a semi-open-air entertainment space. The walls of the original front foyer have been covered with dry wall; the floor is poured concrete and the wood posts remain at the southern end of the foyer. The central, main space of the section maintains its brick walls, wood posts, and beaded board ceilings. At the southern end, or rear, of this section, iron beams remain but the wall deteriorated and partially collapsed in the late twentieth century. The remaining deteriorated portion has recently been removed to create an open-air courtyard.

Sections 1C and 1D are undergoing renovation for possible use as a spa and boutique hotel.

Sections 1E and 1F
South of Sections 1C and 1D, once separated by the railroad spur, are Sections 1E and 1F. The majority of these sections were constructed c. 1941 and encompassed the cinder block dye house, wool scouring room, a small shed, and a large, one-story, wood frame, metal-sided warehouse. Circa 1972, a small, cinder-block chemical storage room was attached at the southern end.

At the western end is the dye and wool scouring building that reveals an unusual, barrel-shaped truss system with slightly curved metal trusses. East of this are two rooms along the northern elevation that have a simple, two-by-four inch stud system with wood posts and wood trusses. The walls are concrete block and the floors are poured concrete.

The final additions to the southern side between 1962 and 1972 are all constructed of cinder block. They include chemical storage room attached to the south end of the dye and wool scouring building; a two-story building used for washing and drying blankets at the center of these southern additions; and an easternmost two-story building with no known use. These additions have poured concrete floors, concrete block and wood walls, and exposed wood beams in the ceiling supported on round metal posts.

Section 1G
Section 1G was added to the mill complex c. 1962 and is the large warehouse section attached on the east side of Section 1E. Recently used as a weekend flea market along with portions of Section 1H, Section 1G was erected to provide storage for blankets made at the mill. This space is a simple wood-frame building with an exposed wood post, beam, and rafter roofing system. The floors are poured concrete and wood and the walls are covered with diagonal wood boards.

Sections 1E, 1F, and 1G are all structurally stable, but are undergoing renovation for possible use as a market or community kitchen.

Section 1H
Circa 1972, Section 1H was added to the east end of the mill to expand storage space for mill blanket production. A portion of this space was most recently used as weekend flea-market shops. Part of the floor is wood and part concrete with linoleum tile. The walls are concrete block and the ceiling has exposed iron beams supported on iron posts. The section has been renovated for use as an entertainment space.

Section 1I
Section 1I was also added c. 1972 as the weave room and has been renovated for use as an entertainment/reception space. Originally added to expand the weaving capacity of Section 1A, this is a large wood frame building at the north end of Section 1A. The interior is a single room except for a kitchen area in the northwest comer. It has brick, wood, and dry-wall walls; a wood floor; and an exposed metal truss roof system. This room is used currently as a banquet hall for civic community celebrations and events, including wedding receptions and parties.

2. Coal Storage Building (c. 1941, contributing building)
The coal storage building is located at the southwest corner of the property at the edge of Sinking Creek just south of where the railroad spur once ran. This three-story, concrete block building has a concrete block foundation and a flat roof. The simple wood double-door entrance is located at the eastern end of the north elevation. A single window opening is located above this door. A two-light sash window is on the west elevation. The east elevation and the south elevation are solid concrete block walls. The south elevation is obscured by landscaping.

3. Office Building (1947, contributing building)

EXTERIOR

The 1947 office faces east toward North Maple Street and is located within the "L" of the mill building. It is a one-story brick, "T"-shaped, cross gable, Colonial Revival building with a brick foundation and an asphalt shingle roof. The new office provided space for sales people and office staff. The architect was Francis B. Warfield[1] and Associates, the contractor H.L. Chenault and Son, the landscaper William C. Alford, and the interior designer Mrs. Alice Calgy. Lebanon Woolen Mills held a dedication ceremony for the building on June 25, 1947.

The façade of 1947 building contains three bays, with the central bay projecting slightly. The central entrance bay has a six-panel wood door with a simple wood surround. Four-over-four, double-hung wood windows flank the door. A flat-roof entrance portico shelters this bay and is supported by square, fluted wood posts. A wrought iron railing tops the portico. On either side of the entrance bay are a set of two bays that are slightly recessed from the main block, each containing a six-over-six, double-hung wood window. At the south end of the building and set back from the adjacent section is a c. 1955 addition with a recessed replacement metal-and-glass entrance door. Brick steps with a wrought-iron railing lead from the south to this entrance. A wood cornice runs along the east façade and shutters flank the windows.

The south elevation is composed of the gable end of the north-south wing and the "T"-wing of the building. The gable end contains two six-over-six, double-hung wood windows. A brick belt course runs along this elevation at the water table and a semi-circular wood vent is located within the gable field. The south elevation of the "T"-wing of the building has three bays, the central of which is a recessed entrance. The south wall of the recession contains a six-over-six, double-hung, wood window, and the west wall contains a six-panel wood door with a simple wood surround. Single bays, each with a single six-over-six, double-hung, wood window flank this entrance bay. The brick belt course continues along this wing.

The west elevation of the building is the rear of the north-south wing and the rear gable end of the "T"-wing. The southern end of the north-south wing contains two bays, the southernmost being a replacement metal-and-glass door and the northernmost being a single six-over-six, double-hung, wood window. The gable end of the "T"-wing has two bays, each with a six-over-six, double-hung, wood window. The gable field is covered with wood siding and has a semi-circular wood vent. A brick water table is visible on this elevation. The north end of the north-south wing contains six bays. The northern two bays have six-over-six, double-hung, wood windows identical to those on the remainder of the building. The third, fifth, and sixth bays from the north contain smaller six-over-six, double-hung, wood windows. The fourth bay from the north contains an original six-panel wood door. The belt course continues along this elevation.

The north elevation of the building is the gable end of the north-south wing and the "T"-wing. The "T"-wing has three bays of six-over-six, double-hung, wood windows. The gable end of the north-south wing also has three bays of six-over-six, double-hung, wood windows. A semi-circular wood vent is in the gable field. The belt course continues along both sections of this elevation.

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[1] Warfield was an architect and engineer who was born in Columbia, TN. His engineering degree was from Vanderbilt University. He worked with the Nashville Industrial Corporation at Old Hickory, TN and was in partnership with Donald W. Southgate from 1924 to 1929. In 1929 he Joined Nashville architect Edwin Keeble in a partnership. From Joseph L. Herndon "Architects in Tennessee until 1930: A Dictionary" thesis Columbia University, 1975), p. 109.

This exterior of this building retains much of its original material. Aside from two doors in the southern addition, all of windows and doors are original.

INTERIOR

The interior of the office is divided into a reception area, five offices, two large conference spaces, and bathrooms and utility spaces. The offices in the front wing of the building are arranged around a "U"-shaped hallway. The building has been recently restored, but retains much of its original materials and features. The floors have been covered with carpet, but the original ceiling tiles, wood chair rails, wood baseboards and ceiling molding, doors, and windows remain. The walls are plaster and dry wall and some spaces retain their original beaded-board wainscoting. An original pull-down stair provides access to the attic from the hallway.

The interior and exterior of the office building retain a high degree of integrity.

4. Blanket Storage Building (1961, noncontributing building, due to date)
The blanket storage building, now used as a gymnastics studio, is located at the northwest edge of the property. It is a rectangular, side gable, metal structure with minimal openings and a low-pitched metal roof. The main entrance is along the southern elevation and is composed of two metal-and-glass double doors sheltered by an open-gable metal portico.

These resources are set within an industrial complex just northeast of Lebanon's downtown square. The forms and styles of the buildings, as well as its location near the railroad line, are representative of a large 20th century industrial landscape. A railroad spur once ran from the rail line across the creek into the mill complex. The spur tracks have been removed, but an alley runs though the southern end of the complex (between sections 1B, 1C and 1F) to mark the former location of the spur. The complex is surrounded by a mostly intact early to mid-twentieth century residential neighborhood that was once mostly worker housing. Also surviving on the mill complex is a concrete shuffleboard deck located at the northeast corner of the property adjacent to the residential section. The mill complex as well as the nearby railroad, creek, and surrounding residential neighborhood all contribute to the industrial character of the property. The site retains a high degree of integrity of materials, design, setting, and association.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Lebanon Woolen Mills, known informally as the "Mill at Lebanon," located in Lebanon (pop. 21,887 in 2006), Tennessee, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C for its local and statewide significance in the areas of industry, labor history, and architecture. It is being nominated under Criterion A for its contributions to the industrial and labor history of Lebanon from 1909 to 1957. During these years, the mill played a significant role in the economy of Lebanon and Wilson County, employing local workers and contributing to the town's growing industrial base. In addition, the site is eligible for listing under Criterion C as a representative example of the industrial architecture of southern woolen textile mills. Prominent industrialist John Edgerton served as the mill's president from 1914 to 1938 and worked with leaders of American businesses locally, regionally, and nationally to promote the interests of American industrial employers. Edgerton's resume was exceptional as a business leader, as he served as president of the Tennessee Manufacturers' Association (1915-1933), founder and president of the Southern States Industrial Council (1934-1938), a member of the board of directors of the National Association of Manufacturers (1916-1921), president of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) from 1921 to 1931, Chairman of the Board of NAM (1931-1932), and a member of the Board of Directors of NAM (1933- 1937).

History of Lebanon Woolen Mills

Dr. Howard K. Edgerton incorporated Lebanon Woolen Mills in 1908, with the help of capital from local businessmen. Hoping to profit personally from the enterprise, Edgerton also saw the mill as a place of regular employment for the people of Lebanon. By using locally produced wool, he also created a market for farmers in the area. Wilson County, in fact, held the largest number of sheep of any county in Tennessee in 1900 and 1910, and a precedent for their use had been in place for years in Tennessee.[2] The sheep population apparently held steady into the mid-twentieth century. In 1943, the *Wilson County News* reported that more sheep were raised in Wilson County than in any other county south of the Kentucky border.[3]

The mill established by Dr. Edgerton and the other stockholders had its first meeting on December 31, 1908, at which time they elected Dr. Edgerton as President, elected other officers and directors, and established committees to bring the mill into operation. The board of directors included Howard K. Edgerton (President), H.M. Freeman (General Manager), R.P. McCIain, J. J. Askew, F.C. Stratton, Sam M. Anderson, I. J. Dodson, and E. E. Baird (Vice President), all local businessmen.

The mill's initial capital investment, raised locally, was $60,000, with an additional $40,000 in stock sold in 1910.[4] Committees included machinery, building, site, transportation, power, and by-laws. They purchased a site in 1909, just west of North Maple Street, and erected the original buildings over a total area of 44,336 square feet. Dr. Edgerton originally wanted to make fabric for men's trousers, but the wool from sheep in

[2] *This is Lebanon Woolen Mills.* Wilson County's 23,132 sheep led the other counties by a wide margin in 1990, less so in 1910, and still by a wide margin in 1925. Wilson County had 56,806 sheep in 1910. See C.E. Allred, S.W. Watkins, and G.H. Hatfield, *Tennessee, Economic and Social. Part II. The Counties* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Extension Series, 1929), 77.
[3] "Mill Employees to Witness Presentation of 'E' Flag," The *Wilson County News, 7* January 1943, 1.
[4] Ellen Taylor Shlink, *This is the Place: A History of Lebanon, Tennessee, 1780-1972* (Lebanon: Blue and Gray Press, 1976), 94.

the area was too coarse, and decided that the factory would make woolen blankets instead.[5] In the mill's early days, local farmers brought their sheep onto the mill's grounds to have them sheared.[6] After installing machinery and hiring the mill's first 40 employees, production began, and the mill shipped its first blankets in January 1910. Their initial goal was 75,000 blankets; by 1958, the mill was shipping over one million blankets annually and employing over 300 workers.[7]

The caption to a historic photograph from 1910, showing 32 of the 40 workers reads: “Lebanon Woolen Mills first forty employees, 1910.” A social snapshot of the original workers can be obtained from the 1910 manuscript census for the town of Lebanon, which reveals some of the characteristics of this group. All of the workers lived in District 10, Ward 4, on streets adjoining or near the mill and, perhaps, in company housing. The workers were evenly divided between the genders, with 19 males and 18 females. They were overwhelmingly white, with only one worker (listed as "laborer") reported as “mulatto.” Almost all were natives of Tennessee, the exceptions being a foreman from England and a family from Georgia with four female mill workers and a female weaver from Germany in the same household. The physical distribution of the workers in Ward 4 reveals clearly that they resided in houses on streets near the mill.

Dr. Edgerton was instrumental in founding the Lebanon Woolen Mill, but his role was short-lived, since he suffered a physical collapse in 1912. The mill's day-to-day leadership may have passed to his brother, John Emmett (E.) Edgerton, at that time, but it was not until 1914, when Dr. Edgerton died, that John E. Edgerton became president of the mill.[8] Measured by changes in the physical plant (see Section 7) and by growth of the labor force, it is evident that the Lebanon Woolen Mills expanded substantially during the presidency of John E. Edgerton. The mill purchased land for the initial mill in 1909, but added parcels of land over the years, sometimes including residences and other buildings in the purchase.[9] The 1920 census lists 58 employees, up from 37 in 1910, including 25 men and 33 women. Census data from 1910, 1920, and 1930, along with the physical expansion of the plant, reveal that the Lebanon Woolen Mills became a substantial economic enterprise by 1930 and was probably the largest single industrial employer in the city.

Until the collapse of the U.S. economy in 1929, textile and other industrial employers, such as Henry Ford, devised a variety of techniques to encourage worker efficiency and forestall unionization, particularly in response to the relative success of unions such as the American Federation of Labor (AFL) under Samuel Gompers. In his early years as mill President, John E. Edgerton and the mill managers added a variety of recreational activities to the profit sharing and daily chapel services already in place. Croquet and softball teams comprised of mill employees competed during the summer, and a string band made up of mill employees entertained the workers at weekly square dances through the winter.[10] A concrete shuffleboard

[5] Interview with Charles Baird by Margaret Miller and Gena Gilliam, Lebanon, Tennessee, 11 October 2001.
[6] “Profile of Tennessee Woolen Mills,” Tennessee Woolen Mills press release, May 1993. Charles Baird interview.
[7] *This is Lebanon Woolen Mills*, 32-33.
[8] John E. Edgerton's obituary, *Nashville Tennessean*, August 5, 1938, p. 14, indicates that he became active at the mill in 1912, when he left his position as co-principal of the Columbia Military Academy, which he had co-founded with Col. J.C. Hardy. See also, “He Truly Lived by the Side of the Road;” *This is Lebanon Woolen Mills*, 6.
[9] See Deed Books 66, p.467; 71, p.319; 80, p.112, 188, 209-210; 81, p.28; 90, p.112, 128; 96, p. 205; 97, p. 383-384; 110, pp. 267-68, 570 for purchases from 1909 to 1941.
[10] “'We're Not Worried; We're Doing Our Job,' Says R.F. Corum, OIdest Mill Employee,” *The Wilson World*, 28 January 1943, 2.

deck, also evidence of the mill's concern for worker recreation, was at the northeast corner of the mill property just off N. Maple Street. John E. Edgerton's managerial approach to his work force suggests a combination of progressive welfare capitalism and more traditional paternalism, the former in his use of some kind of profit sharing with employees and the latter in the institution of daily chapel services.

After John E. Edgerton's death in 1938, the new mill president, Howard K. Edgerton, Jr., continued the paternalistic practice of encouraging church attendance by mill employees. Edgerton, Jr., however, abandoned the daily chapel service for a Sunday school for workers and their families.[11] Howard continued another practice, considered a highlight each year: the annual Christmas party at which all employees received cash bonuses and baskets of groceries. Beginning in 1941, Howard K. Edgerton, Jr. recognized selected employees at the Christmas party for service in the community.[12] As company president, Edgerton, Jr. expected a mill representative to serve on every city club.[13]

Howard K. Edgerton, Jr., made several significant changes as president of the mill, beginning his term by running three eight-hour shifts each day, six days a week. He also opened a sales office in New York City in 1938, to place salesmen in closer contact with the mill's customers. During World War II, the New York salesmen secured government contracts for the mill and Lebanon Woolen Mills contributed to the war effort by making blankets for officers and enlisted men in every branch of the armed services. A few days after the attack on Pearl Harbor, federal troops arrived at the site to protect the factory, as it was an industry considered important to the war effort. The mill employees were fingerprinted and issued identification cards, and the soldiers remained until the end of the war.[14] The mill also received the assignment to sound the alarm for town blackouts during the war.[15]

The mill turned to 100 percent production of the Marine blanket, a closely woven wool blanket, during World War II, and employees worked their three eight-hour shifts entirely for war-related production. All employees also pledged ten percent of their wages for war bonds, and invested all of their wages for December 7, 1941, in war bonds in honor of the attack on Pearl Harbor.[16]

The factory received the prestigious Army-Navy "E" award for war production in 1943. Army and Navy officials presented the award to the mill on January 27, 1943, at a special ceremony. Each of the 250 mill employees received a lapel pin on a card with a message from President Roosevelt. The pin was a replica of the Burgee flag (the "E" award pennant), which was displayed above the mill. President Howard K.

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[11] *This is Lebanon Woolen Mills*. Charles Baird, interview by Johnny Knowles, 31 January 2001, Lebanon, Tennessee. Wilson County Archives. "The Lebanon Woolen Mills," *The Highballer* (Tennessee Central Railway, Nashville) Volume 2 (March-April 1957), 8.
[12] *This is Lebanon Woolen Mills*.
[13] Charles Baird, interview by Johnny Knowles.
[14] Interview with Charles Baird by Gena Gilliam, Lebanon, Tennessee, 11 October 2001; Charles Baird interview by Johnny Knowles.
[15] "Woolen Mills Whistle to Sound Blackout Alarm," *The Wilson County News*, 3 December 1942, 1.
[16] "Mill Employees to Witness Presentation of "E" Flag," *The Wilson County News*, 7 January 1943. *The Wilson County News*, 28 January 1943, 2.

Edgerton, Jr. received the pennant on behalf of the company, and the mill's oldest employee at the time, R.F. Corum, received the pins on behalf of the employees.[17]

The Lebanon Woolen Mills participated fully in the post-World War II economic boom. By 1947, the mill was producing 450,000 blankets a year, six times its production in the early 1920s. As part of that prosperity, the company constructed a new, modern office building and determined to dedicate it with a ceremony in 1947. Included among the dignitaries for the dedication was J.C. Penney, a long-standing customer.[18]

In 1950, Howard K. Edgerton, Jr.'s health prevented his retaining his position as president of the mill. Instead, he became Chairman of the Board and Vice-President, promoting Sales Manager J. Elmer Hahn to president. One of Hahn's first initiatives was to close the mill's Sunday school, although the traditional paternalistic approach to management continued, as employees were encouraged to join local churches and to become leaders in the local religious community. Hahn also removed the row of 13 worker houses from the property, moving some only a few blocks from the site and into neighborhoods with comparable homes. Removal of the homes, at least some of which were still suitable for occupancy, suggests that the mill management was less interested in supervising worker housing arrangements.[19]

Partial modernization of the mill's relations with its employees was accompanied by modernization in its production. In 1951, the plant began to experiment with synthetic fibers, including Orlon, Nylon, and Acrilan, and by 1953, most of the blankets at Lebanon Woolen Mills were made of acrylic fiber.[20] Converting production from wool to acrylic was a smooth transition, as the mill was able to use its existing machinery to process the synthetic fiber.[21] Lebanon Woolen Mills successfully marketed the new product line and increased production once again in order to meet demand. By 1959, the mill had 400 employees and was producing 1,500,000 blankets a year.[22]

With the death of Howard K. Edgerton, Jr. as Chairman of the Board in 1963, a group of five top managers at the mill bought, collectively, controlling interest in the company. J. Elmer Hahn rose to chairman of the board and Henry Counts moved from vice-president to president and treasurer. Charles Baird retained his position as general manager and also became a vice-president. Leonard Ballard retained his position as secretary, also assuming the title of vice-president. Graydon Robinson remained a vice-president with this shift in ownership. The mill's customers at this time included Sears and J.C. Penney. The mill produced blankets and throws, including electric blankets, stadium robes, and baby blankets.

Several years later, these owner-managers sold their stock to another, younger group. Ownership of the mill passed to ten new managers: Sam Swindell, H. Dean Greer, Doris Garrett, Bobbie Jo Morris, and Jim

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[17] "Mill Employees to Witness Presentation of "E" Flag," *The Wilson County News*, 7 January 1943. Lebanon Woolen Mills to Receive Army-Navy "E" for War Production," *The Wilson County News*, 31 December 1942.
[18] Lebanon Woolen Mills Dedication Program, June 25, 1947 (privately printed).
[19] *This is Lebanon Woolen Mills.* Interview with Jim Crawford by Margaret Miller and Gena Gilliam, Lebanon, Tennessee, 9 April 2002. Mr. Crawford does not know the exact date of the removal, although a c. 1955 aerial photograph shows they were gone by that time.
[20] *This is Lebanon Woolen Mills.*
[21] Jim Crawford interview.
[22] "Woolen Mills Example of Lebanon," *The Lebanon Democrat* (Lebanon, Tennessee), 17 June 1988, 18B.

Crawford, all working in Lebanon, together held a majority interest. Neil Bolton (New York office), Brian Miller (New York), Kenneth Taylor, Jerry Batey, and Ronald Wooden held a minority interest.[23]

Apparently, these improvements were insufficient to rescue the struggling operation. The year 1979 was unprofitable for the company, due in part to rising interest rates. The managers decided that they could not afford to pay a Christmas bonus to the employees that year, for the first time within memory. Disgruntled employees contacted the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) and began organizing. The mill's employees voted down the union at this time, but the issue of unionization would resurface again in the near future.[24]

By 1982, the owner-managers were ready to sell the company. Henry Hancock, a businessman from New York, bought the mill and ran it for the next two years, accumulating more debt for the already debt-ridden company.[25] In 1984, a second unionization drive was successful, and by 1987 about 80 percent of the eligible employees were members of the ACTWU. The presence of the union in the mill, however, apparently did little to improve wages or working conditions at Lebanon Woolen Mills.[26]

In 1984, as unionization accelerated, Spencer Hayes of Brentwood and seven other shareholders bought the company and soon achieved profitability once again. It was at this time that the long-standing name, Lebanon Woolen Mills, was changed to Tennessee Woolen Mills. Hayes brought in his own management team, breaking the mill's tradition of promoting from within, naming Mike Black CEO and placing Bob Barton in the New York office as company president. Jim Crawford was named vice-president of sales and Jerry Batey vice president of manufacturing.[27]

With Spencer Hayes in charge, the company invested four million dollars in new machinery. The average age of machinery in the plant in 1984 was almost 50 years. The company expanded its product line in the direction of natural fibers, particularly cotton. Hayes ended a contract the company had held with the Department of Defense since the middle of the century, since it was losing the company about $2.50 per blanket by the 1980s. The mill continued to produce blankets, throws, and infant products. It had a growing apparel fabrics division by 1988, accounting for about 8% of the company's business.[28]

Products made by Tennessee Woolen Mills were distributed mainly through private labels. Their business was 30 percent department store and national chains, including J.C. Penney, Bloomingdale's, and Macy's; 10 percent catalog and airline (J.C. Penney, Land's End, Continental); 40 percent mass merchant (Wal-Mart, Kmart); and 20 percent institutional. Fringed acrylic throws, mainly in plaids, accounted for about 30

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[23] "Woolen Mills Example of Lebanon," *The Lebanon Democrat* (Lebanon, Tennessee), 17 June 1988, 18B. Interview with Sam SwindeII by Maggie Miller, Lebanon, Tennessee, 7 December 2001; Charles Baird interview by Johnny Knowles.
[24] Crawford interview.
[25] Sam Swindell of Lebanon, interview by Margaret Miller, 7 December 2001, Lebanon, TN.
[26] Lounita Howard, "Woolen Mills Workers Agree to Take Pay Cut," *The Lebanon Democrat* (Lebanon, Tennessee), 22 December 1987: 1.
[27] Howard, *Lebanon Democrat*.
[28] Jena Knobler Taylor, "Tennessee Woolen's coup: becomes sole licensee for Ralph Lauren throws," *HFD-The Weekly Home Furnishings Newspaper* 33:1 (4 July 1988).

percent of Tennessee Woolen's annual sales.[29] By 1993, sales had increased to $25 million per year (from $10 million in 1988) and the mill employed 270 people (up from 225 in 1 987).[30]

In September 1993, Pillowtex purchased Tennessee Woolen Mills for about $12 million. Mike Black continued to head the blanket division of the company.[31] The company was henceforth known as "Tennessee Woolen Mills, a division of Pillowtex Corporation" until it finally closed operations in 1998. Michael Echevarria purchased the mill in 2000, and planned an adaptive reuse of the building by converting the area known as the main mill to retail space. In 2005, Great Space LLC and Theater Space bought the site and continues renovation of the complex. As areas are rehabilitated, they become available for lease.

John E. Edgerton

John E. Edgerton became an important business leader in the town of Lebanon, in Tennessee, and in the nation. He may have become familiar with the textile industry in North Carolina, where he was born in 1879, but he received his formal college education at Cumberland University in Lebanon and at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, where he graduated in 1903. His decision to found the Columbia Military Academy in 1905 with James C. Hardy and to serve as its co-principal for seven years does not suggest a specific interest in the textile industry, but with the collapse of his brother, Howard, in 1912, John E. Edgerton began taking over the operations at the mill.[32]

During the years John E. Edgerton served as the Lebanon Woolen Mill's president, from 1914 until his death in 1938, his interest in business and industry led him to become involved with several regional and national employer associations. In fact, he became an exceptionally prominent business leader, elected president of the Tennessee Manufacturers Association in 1915,[33] named "director-at-large" of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) in 1916, and elected president of NAM in 1921.[34]

Edgerton's career as a important American business leader appears to begin with the Tennessee Manufacturers' Association (TMA) in 1914 when he came to the attention of the TMA board of directors as an opponent of company liability for worker accidents resulting from, as he argued, the carelessness of fellow workers. He appeared before the Tennessee legislature that same year to speak against a workmen's compensation bill and, according to an internal NAM publication, his 15-minute speech after

[29] Sam Adler, "Spin doctors: by producing its own yarn, Tennessee Woolen has been able to expand its product line and lower its prices," *HFD-The Weekly Home Furnishings Newspaper* 31:3 (30 November 1992).
[30] Lounita Howard, "Lebanon Mill Founded in 1908," *The Lebanon Democrat* (Lebanon, Tennessee), 2 September 1993, 9.
[31] "PiIlowtex buys Manetta; Tenn. Woolen next," *HFD-The Weekly Home Furnishings Newspaper*, 6 September 1993, 6(1).
[32] Information from *The National Cyclopedia*, an article among the papers of Lucy Van Voorhies with no date or author; see also, "John Edgerton Dies in Lebanon," *Nashville Tennessean*, August 5, 1938, p. l, 14.
[33] This is Lebanon Woolen Mills, 6.
[34] Richard S. Tedlow, *Keeping the Corporate Image: Public Relations and Business, 1900-1950* (Greenwich, Connecticut: JAl Press, 1979), 60.

midnight sealed political defeat for the bill.[35] The following year, 1915, Edgerton was elected President of the Tennessee Manufacturers' Association, a position he still held in 1933, while also serving as President of NAM.[36]

Edgerton's company, Lebanon Woolen Mills, joined NAM about that time, and Edgerton was elected to the Board of Directors of NAM in 1916. The National Association of Manufacturers was founded in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1895 as an employers' association made up of the leaders of private corporations from across the country. It became one of the most important business organization in the United States in the twentieth century, and today probably the most influential such association in the nation.[37] John E. Edgerton contributed substantially to the values and political activities of the organization between 1916 and his death in 1938. Although involved in a variety of business promotional activities, the single most important position of NAM was to oppose efforts by organized labor, particularly the AFL, to legalize collective bargaining and to require adoption of the “closed shop” in businesses successfully organized by a labor union.

Business historian Richard S. Tedlow emphasized NAM's “single-minded determination to stamp out unionism” during the Progressive Era. By 1918, he pointed out, NAM was publicizing its views through newspapers, a speaker's bureau, posters, a newsletter (*American Industries*), and even a motion picture.[38] NAM led a coalition of local “open shop” associations after 1902, organized in 1920 under an Open Shop Committee that worked with a professional staff hired to manage an Open Shop Department. From 1920 to 1932, this Department published an *Open Shop Bulletin* and an *Open Shop Newsletter* to promote its point of view against unionism.[39]

Edgerton may have been directly involved in organizing the Open Shop Department, but records are not clear. According to an internal publication, NAM drew up a “platform of American industry” in 1920 that brought Edgerton from Tennessee to New York on three occasions in his role on the Board of Directors. His “calm aggressiveness” attracted support, elevating him to President of NAM in 1921 by unanimous vote.[40]

As president of the NAM, Edgerton led the ferocious opposition of NAM to the “closed shop” goals of unions who hoped to include all employees of individual businesses in the union for purposes of collective bargaining and other work-related items. This position brought Edgerton and NAM into serious conflict with Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal labor initiatives after 1933. It seems highly unlikely, then, that labor

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[35] This information comes from a 1930 NAM publication, “Milestones Along the Industrial Trail,” that includes a section entitled “Highlights in the Industrial Biography of the President,” at that time John E. Edgerton. Typescript from the Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.
[36] John Dean Minton, “The New Deal in Tennessee, 1932-1938” (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1959) refers to Edgerton in 1933 as president of the TMA and in 1937 as “former” president of TMA. See pp. 124, 235.
[37] The NAM website quotes the New York Times as referring to the association as “The nation's chief business lobbying group.” See http://nam.org/
[38] Richard S. Tedlow, *Keeping the Corporate Image: Public Relations and Business, 1900-1950* (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1979, 60, 74 (footnote 3).
[39] Allen M. Wakstein, “The National Association of Manufacturers and Labor Relations in the 1920s,” Business History Review 10 (1969), 165.
[40] “Milestones along the Industrial Trail,” p. E4.

organizations achieved any kind of a foothold at the Lebanon Woolen Mills during the presidency of John E. Edgerton from 1914 to 1938.[41]

Edgerton's specific role as president of NAM between 1921 and 1931 cannot be determined precisely from published historical materials, although various historians have researched the policies and actions of NAM during that decade.[42] His opposition to organized labor, however, is clearly apparent in materials from the 1930s, when his role in NAM became less central but his opposition to the New Deal became more focused through the Tennessee Manufacturers' Association and the Southern States Industrial Council. During the 1920s, NAM virtually denied the legitimacy of unions, refusing to accept the notion of independent unions and collective bargaining. As Wakstein pointed out, NAM members' unwillingness to bargain with unions "rendered meaningless the right of labor to organize." The Open Shop drive, he continued, "sought, if not to obliterate unions, at least to remold them in the employers' image of what they should be."[43]

During the 1920s, however, an internal debate emerged within NAM between the Open Shop Committee and the Industrial Relations Committee, one in which the latter committee sought to promote a milder and more progressive public image through welfare capitalism measures such as employee representation, profit sharing, group insurance, housing assistance, and pension plans. Edgerton's policies at the Lebanon Woolen Mill suggest that he may have been sympathetic to such paternalistic approaches. In 1923, for example, he called upon manufacturers "to begin thinking more and more of their obligations and to insist less upon their rights," to give workers a "square deal in industry," and to be "liberal" in dealing with them.[44] In a classic statement of employer paternalism, the 1923 NAM conference adopted a resolution asserting that "an obligation or trusteeship to his employees and to the public rests upon the employer."[45]

Whatever his policies in Lebanon, Edgerton as President of NAM clearly did not facilitate implementation of mechanisms by which workers could communicate their concerns effectively. The logic of the Open Shop was that business should be unencumbered, even though NAM articulated a philosophy that management was responsible for providing an alternative to collective bargaining. At its annual convention in 1927, NAM seemed ready to consider some of the new ideas when it appointed a special committee to study them. If the committee ever offered any proposals, NAM leadership never adopted them. Following the more progressive approaches of welfare capitalism was left to individual businesses under the NAM umbrella. Allen Wakstein concluded that NAM "accepted the victory of the open shop as paramount and worked only in token fashion" to introduce meaningful alternatives to unionism.[46] Richard Tedlow concurred, referring to

[41] John E. Edgerton's role as a business leader, as well as welfare capitalism, are discussed in more detail below.
[42] In addition to the works by Tedlow and Wakstein cited previously, information on NAM during the 1920s is available in Albion Guilford Taylor, Labor Policies of the National Association of Manufacturers (New York: Arno Press, 1973) and in Albert K. Steigerwalt, The National Association of Manufacturers, 1895-1914 (Ann Arbor, MT: University of Michigan Bureau of Business Research, 1964). The Steigerwalt work is extremely favorable to the policies of NAM. Detailed information on Edgerton in both the 1920s and 1930s can only be obtained by research in the NAM manuscripts available at the Hagley Museum and Library in Wilmington, Delaware.
[43] Wakstein, "National Association of Manufacturers and Labor Relations in the 1920s," 166.
[44] Ibid., 174.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.

Edgerton as “a relatively benign and paternalistic textile manufacturer from Tennessee” who oversaw an organization devoted, above all, to the open shop.[47]

Edgerton's continued reelection as NAM president in the 1920s likely reflects the simple fact that conservative business values achieved a high degree of acceptance during the decade, at least as reflected in the election of three decidedly conservative Republican presidents. Historian Andrew Workman suggested that NAM’s very success in the 1920s might have weakened it organizationally insofar as it was unprepared to counter the labor measures brought forth by the New Deal when the economy collapsed after 1929.[48] It was the economic effects of the Depression soon after the crash, however, not the New Deal in 1933, that determined Edgerton's fate in the 1930s. As the economy declined, NAM members terminated their affiliation or did not pay their dues. By 1933, membership declined from 5,350 in 1922 to under 1,500, resignations averaged 65 per month, and the *American Industries* newsletter ceased publication. Richard Tedlow described NAM as in “crisis” by the end of 1931, a situation that Edgerton himself must have recognized. A 1931 statement by Edgerton describing the Depression as “psychological,” and blaming jobless and homeless Americans for not having practiced “habits of thrift and conservation,” suggests a degree of detachment from the tragedy that was overwhelming American citizens.[49] Edgerton offered to retire in 1931, after 11 years of service, but to prevent further erosion of morale, NAM appointed him to a specially created new position: chairman of the board. Edgerton held this position, however, for only six months, from December 1931 to June 1932.[50].

Although replaced as president in 1931, and then as chairman of the board in 1932, Edgerton continued to serve on the board of directors from 1933 to 1937.[51] Whether he played an active policy-making role as a director in the New Deal years is not clear from available documentation, but NAM aggressively developed a new organizational structure after 1931 under the leadership of Robert L. Lund, president of Lambert Pharmaceutical and a former NAM vice-president. Lund was a member of a small group of executives from some of American's largest corporations, a group known within NAM as the “Brass Hats.” The Brass Hats reorganized NAM in the 1930s, shifting its focus from providing services to its members toward public relations and public education on the contribution of American industry. Edgerton may have continued to influence NAM policy, since the Brass Hats centralized control of NAM by concentrating decision-making authority within the executive council of the Board of Directors.

However, it was the larger corporations, those with over 500 workers that dominated NAM in the 1930s, even though the number of small firms grew from 1,000 in 1933 to over 4,500 in 1938. With additional funding, NAM became increasingly professional in the 1930s as well, expanding full-time, paid staff

[47] Tedlow, *Keeping the Corporate Image*, p. 60.
[48] Andrew A. Workman, “Manufacturing Power: The Organizational Revival of the National Association of Manufacturers, 1941-1945, *Business History Review* 72 (Summer, 1998), 5-6.
[49] Stuart Ewen, *PR! A History of Spin* (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 235.
[50] Tedlow, *Keeping the Corporate Image*, 60 and 74 (footnote 6).
[51] Email communication from Joni Hodgson, Vice President and Corporate Secretary, NAM, to D. Lorne McWatters, November 11, 2002. We have been unable to determine Edgerton's role in NAM between 1932, when he stepped down as Chairman of the Board, and 1933, when he again joined the Board of Directors.

substantially. Unlike the old staff, the new employees "held advanced degrees in economics, law, and other fields or had extensive experience in public relations and advertising.[52]

NAM's reorganization after 1931 was essentially a reaction first, to the economic effects of the Depression and, second, to Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal labor policies. Particularly significant was passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) in 1933, legislation that established "fair competition" codes and enforcement procedures by which labor and industry would work together under the guidance and supervision of the federal government. Each code gave employees the right to organize and bargain collectively, no employee could be compelled to join a company union, and employers were required to comply with maximum hours, minimum wages, and other conditions spelled out in the individual agreements. The NIRA was administered under the umbrella organization of the National Recovery Administration (NRA). Tennessee's major newspapers, the Chamber of Commerce, all nine congressmen and both senators, and the TMA supported the NIRA. So, too, did John E. Edgerton, still president of the TMA, in a 1933 speech before over 200 industrialists at a conference sponsored by the Memphis Chamber of Commerce. The NIRA, Edgerton declared, was "the most drastic and revolutionary legislation which has ever emanated from a law making body." He urged employer-employee cooperation and admonished his audience to accept the law with faith.[53]

Tennessee supported the NIRA with speeches by leading businessmen, editorials in all the major newspapers, and parades by thousands of citizens. Businesses that accepted the new codes displayed the famous "Blue Eagle" in their windows to demonstrate compliance with Roosevelt's efforts to reduce unemployment and stimulate the economy. Implementation of the NIRA, however, quickly soured many supporters, including Edgerton. In late 1933 the TMA sponsored a meeting of over 100 industrialists in Chattanooga highlighted by a speech from a Vanderbilt economist, Dr. Gus W. Dyer, who labeled the plan as "preposterous, puerile and quack economics of the lowest order."[54] Enactment of the NIRA faced serious difficulties in compliance and enforcement, generating red tape that frustrated businesses throughout Tennessee. In fact, John Edgerton became involved as a mediator of a strike that began in October 1933, at Harriman Hosiery Mills over the issue of organizing.

Seen as a test of the new legislation, the strike occurred when management refused to reinstate certain employees who had been discharged in July 1933, for union activities and when the company was unwilling to enter into an agreement with the representatives of its employees. The issue was serious, since the hosiery mills employed 650 workers in a town of about 8,000. Edgerton's role as mediator is unclear, since his obituary explains only that he had the "role of mediator in one of the NRA's first test cases."[55] The strike and its associated controversy were bitter. General Hugh Johnson, director of the NRA, ordered that the

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[52] Workman, "Manufacturing Power," 6-7, notes that NAM's staff grew from "several dozen" in 1933 to over 200 by 1942. See also Tedlow, *Keeping the Corporate Image*, 60-61. This nomination does not treat the growing influence of NAM in the latter years of the Roosevelt presidency, as the organization became increasingly influential as a business lobbyist. In addition to Workman and Tedlow, the best treatment of NAMs techniques and expanding power is Elizabeth A. Fones-Wolf, *Selling Free Enterprise: The Business Assault on Labor and Liberalism, 1945-1960* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

[53] John Dean Minton, "The New Deal in Tennessee, 1932-1938," (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1959): 115-126; quote from pp. 125-126.

[54] Ibid., 124-130; quote from 130.

[55] "John Edgerton Dies in Lebanon."

"Blue Eagle" be removed from the Harriman Hosiery Mills offices, leading to a protest by 60 local Harriman merchants, who removed their Blue Eagles in protest of the government's action.

During the strike, which stretched into August, 1934, workers were arrested and jailed in nearby Kingston, Tennessee; a union leader, Fred Held, was taken from a train, escorted out of town, and threatened with death if he returned to Harriman; a former vice-president of General Motors, A.R. Glancy, negotiated a settlement with management; and the NRA declared the agreement to be legally binding. Edgerton's role in this mediation is not mentioned in John Dean Minton's relatively detailed treatment of the Harriman strike, even though Edgerton's obituary emphasized his role and Minton mentions him elsewhere. By late 1933, however, and certainly by 1934, Edgerton became a strong opponent of the NRA, making it unlikely that he would have been especially sympathetic to the strikers' point of view.[56]

Opposition to the administration of the NRA in Tennessee led to the formation of a number of new organizations hopeful of presenting a united front to oppose or suggest changes in NRA procedures or to work more effectively with the recovery agency. Among these organizations were the Southern Garment Manufacturing Association, Associated Manufacturers of Tennessee, the Appalachian Wholesale Confectioners Association, the Tennessee Lumber, Millwood, and Supply Dealer Association, and the Southern States Industrial Council (SSIC), the last association established by John E. Edgerton in 1934. Edgerton was so disturbed by the NRA program, he declared in testimony before a Senate Finance Committee investigating the NRA in 1935, that he created the SSIC as "a child of the N.R.A." "It sprang into what was thought to be necessary existence, spontaneous existence," he continued, "immediately after the codes began to become operative."[57]

Edgerton testified that Tennessee manufacturers were struggling with increased production costs caused by higher wages to such an extent that they could no longer compete effectively with other sections of the United States, a view he had expressed as early as December 1933.[58] This kind of opposition to the NRA became common within the Tennessee business community and throughout the nation, spearheaded by employer associations such as the NAM and by smaller organizations such as the SSIC. In 1935 the Supreme Court declared the NRA unconstitutional, but Roosevelt and the Democratic Party had sufficient political power to pass new pro-labor legislation, the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) of 1935, which guaranteed collective bargaining; and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1938, which established new minimum standards for wages, hours, and child labor.

John E. Edgerton continued to oppose such legislation, and was one of several Tennesseans who helped to delay passage of the FLSA when it first came up as a bill in 1937. On June 11, 1937, Edgerton testified before the Committee on Labor in the House of Representatives in his capacity as president of the SSIC and as former president of the TMA and NAM. Considered by organized labor to be one of their leading opponents, Edgerton opposed the FLSA because he believed it did not take into consideration the diversity in earning power of American industries. He feared the act would create a bureaucracy with the power of life and death over the textile industry and that the bureaucracy would be controlled by old industrial sections unsympathetic to the new industries of the South. Wages, he asserted, should be based on

[56] Ibid.; Minton, "New Deal in Tennessee," 133-134, 207-213. See discussion of Edgerton's opposition to the NRA and other New Deal legislation below.
[57] Edgerton chartered the SSIC on May 22, 1934. Minton, "New Deal in Tennessee," 135-136, 236.
[58] Ibid, 136.

prevailing conditions in the industry and in the localities involved, Edgerton also admitted that he had been one of the leaders in the South "in speaking against any and all State or National laws that would provide a minimum wage of maximum hours in industry," and noted that the TMA had consistently opposed either state or federal laws establishing a minimum wage. The TMA, he added, opposed the federalization of the industrial process at every point.[59]

As President of the Lebanon Woolen Mills (1914-1938), as President of the Tennessee Association of Manufacturers (1915-1933), as President of the National Association of Manufacturers (1921-1931), as Chairman of the Board of NAM (1931-1932) and then as a board member (1933-1937), and as President of the Southern States Industrial Council (1934-1938), John E. Edgerton's views and actions affected not only the lives of employees at the Lebanon Woolen Mills, but of workers throughout Tennessee and the United States. Most prominent was Edgerton's opposition to labor unions, to the "closed shop," which he regarded as employer interference with the rights of business owners.

Although John E. Edgerton was president of state, regional, and national organizations, often at the same time between 1914 and 1938, he and his family continued to live in Lebanon at the home of his brother Howard's widow, Willie Edgerton. This home, at 314 West Main Street, was located only a few blocks from the mill on North Maple Street. Initially he lived there with his wife, daughter, brother's widow, and her son. Willie' Edgerton's son, Howard K. Edgerton, Jr. served as superintendent of the mill while he lived with the rest of the family. By 1930, Howard K. Edgerton, Jr., had moved to another house on West Main St. with his wife, and assumed the position of vice-president.

Industrial History

The structures nominated are representative of an industrial use consistent with trends in the textile industry during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Beginning in the 1880s, the South witnessed an economic transformation as southern—and northern—businessmen sought to industrialize along northern lines. The South was a convenient location for textile manufacturing because of proximity to raw materials, availability of cheap labor, and lower cost of taxes, building, and land. These factors allowed southern mills to compete with similar textile mills in New England, and eventually to replace many of them. The entrepreneurs who established the textile industry in the South precipitated substantial changes in the region, as men, women, and children moved from farms to urban areas and company towns to work in the new factories.[60]

While industrialization in the South was well on its way by 1908, the year in which the Lebanon Woolen Mills was founded, rural Wilson County was just beginning its growth as a center of manufacturing.[61] The town of Lebanon had witnessed several improvements to its infrastructure in recent years, making the community more amenable to industrial development. In 1907, a new power plant opened in Lebanon, lowering electricity bills, and in August 1908, the North Carolina & Saint Louis Railroad (NC & St.L) announced it would bring tracks into the downtown area. The Lebanon Woolen Mills soon made use of these

[59] Ibid., 235-237. Quote from 236.
[60] For an excellent introduction to the development of textile manufacturing in the South, see Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, James Leloudis, Robert Korstad, Mary Murphy, Lu Ann Jones, and Christopher B. Daly, *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1987).
[61] See William F. Donovan, "The Growth of the Industrial Spirit in Tennessee, 1890-1910" (Ph.D. diss., Nashville: George Peabody College for Teachers, 1955) for an analysis of early industrialization efforts in Tennessee.

improvements by running a spur from the NC & St.L into the mill and shipping its product across the country.[62] Several smaller companies joined the woolen mill by opening in the first decades of the twentieth century, but for many years Lebanon Woolen Mills was the only major employer in town. Even as other large companies established themselves in Lebanon, the mill remained the largest employer into the late 1950s.[63]

It is important to note the significance of welfare capitalism and company paternalism as an essential characteristic of textile mill operations in the United States generally, and at Lebanon Woolen Mills specifically, during the years of John Edgerton's presidency of the mill from 1914 to 1938. Historians of labor and business have generated an enormous literature on these subjects to help Americans understand not only the development of corporate capitalism and the welfare state in the twentieth century but also the nature of work itself. Some historians, such as the authors of *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World*, a study of the southern cotton textile industry in the Carolinas, Georgia, and Tennessee, emphasize worker “agency,” suggesting that company paternalism was always offset to some extent by workers' ability to “negotiate” the terms of their employment. Others, such as Douglass Flamming, author of *Creating the Modem South: Millhands and Managers in Dalton, Georgia, 1884-1984*, argue that company paternalism, the power of the employers, was much more substantial than that of the workers. These historians, among many others, explore workplace arrangements, gender and age, religion, education, recreational activities, housing, and various other topics in an effort to understand the dynamics of American capitalism, particularly during the reforms of the Progressive Era from the 1890s until the onset of the Depression of the 1930s, when welfare capitalism collapsed.[64]

There are few textile mills left in the United States, especially mills still in production as recently as 1998. As these mills shut down, many industrial or mill buildings disappeared, along with local job opportunities. Lebanon Woolen Mills was the major employer in Lebanon and Wilson County from its earliest years until the 1960s, still standing today as a living monument to the shift from an agrarian to an industrial economic base in Wilson County. Many residents of Lebanon and nearby areas spent a considerable part of their lives working for the business.

Architectural Significance

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[62] “New Era Begins in County Life When Mills Opened in 1908,” *The Lebanon Democrat* (Lebanon, Tennessee), 26 September 1969. Frank Burns, Chapter XIV: “Industry, Business, and the Town," in *The History of Wilson County, Tennessee: Its Land and Its Life*, ed. Frank Bums (Lebanon, Tennessee: Wilson County Library Board,
1987), 221.

[63] Lounita Howard, “Lebanon Mill Founded in 1908,” *The Lebanon Democrat* (Lebanon, Tennessee), 2 September 1993, 9.

[64] In addition to Hall, et al, *Like a Family*, and Flamming, *Creating the Modern South*, see: Andrea Tone, *The Business of Benevolence: Industrial Paternalism in Progressive America* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1979); Howell John Harris, *Bloodless Victories: The Rise and Fall of the Open Shop in the Philadelphia Metal Trades, 1890-1940* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2000); and Sarah Lyons Watt, *Order Against Chaos: Business Culture and Labor Ideology in America, 1880-1915* (New York, Westport, CT, and London: Greenwood Press, 1991); Gerald Zahavi, *Workers, Managers, and Welfare Capitalism: The Shoeworkers and Tanners of Endicott Johnson, 1890-I915* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988); and Daniel J. Clark, *Like Night and Day: Unionization in a Southern Mill Town* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

The physical form of the Lebanon Woolen Mills complex is an excellent intact example of a productive textile mill operation. The original portion of the mill and later additions to expand operations are all representative of trends in twentieth century industrial architecture. The mill's owners in December 1908 broke ground for a small textile mill planned to open in 1910 with approximately forty workers. Although many mills erected in the early twentieth century were designed by identifiable professional designers, or consultants, who worked in this position before the term "consultant" appeared in common usage, the architects for the Lebanon mill are not known.[65]

The 1909 mill included two large, partially connected buildings, with a total of 44,336 square feet. These sections of the original structure were fairly typical of industrial mill architecture in the early twentieth century, sometimes called "daylight factories," with a low-pitched gable roof and large, multi-light metal industrial windows, and brick walls.[66] The large windows were expensive in terms of energy costs to heat the buildings in which they were placed, but were thought worthwhile because of the "improved health [and] the improved moral; physical and aesthetic conditions" in the mills.[67] Although they increased the heating cost, large windows such as these allowed for a significant amount of natural light, cutting down on the cost to light the building during the day.

The 1909 mill also included a two-and-one-half story gable roof building that housed an office and binding operation on the first floor, and a warehouse on the second. Binding was the process by which hems and reinforcements were sewn on to the blankets. A bridge connected rooms to the main mill structure. Between 1913 and 1920, the mill made two important changes as production grew in response to army blanket contracts with the U.S. Amy during World War I. The owners enclosed the area between the original office/binding/warehouse building and the wash and dry/picker building, thereby removing the bridge that previously connected the two sections at the upper level.

The first floor of the napper room housed napping machines that produced nap on the blankets by pulling the top fibers of the fabric into a soft, fleecy surface. The second floor of the napper room, was utilized for storage, space needed, states former employee Cecil Arms, for blankets waiting to be shipped. The mill stockpiled blankets in the fall, winter, and spring months, and shipped in large quantities in the summer as retail outlets prepared for fall sales. Blankets were produced at the same rate year-round, although shipping varied from season to season.[68]

Between 1920 and 1929, the owners made major additions to the mill, both on the north side of the main mill and on the east side of the office/binding/storage building. The second major addition made between 1920 and 1929 was a three-story office and storage section attached to the east side of the original office/binding/warehouse structure. Although the American bond brickwork was similar to that of the adjacent building, and the metal industrial windows similar to those of the original mill, the windows were smaller and occupied less of the overall fenestration on the three exposed elevations (north, east, and south). The multi-light windows had brick sills and no decorative lintels. Spanish-tile coping along the roofline added some architectural interest. For continuity, the owners adopted a door and trim identical to

[65] Betsy Hunter Bradley, *The Works: The Industrial Architecture of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 18-20.
[66] Bradley, *The Works*, 43.
[67] Ibid, 59.
[68] Cecil Arms, interview with Maggie Miller and Gena J. Gilliam, Lebanon, Tennessee, December 2001.

the entrance to the original 1909 mill. A metal canopy with decorative wrought iron posts runs between the two entrances into this addition.

Also between 1920 and 1929, the mill owners made a modest change to the dye room by making it flush with the west wall of the wash and dry room. They also converted the bleach house, located west into a drying room and added a second drying room just south of the converted building. These drying rooms no longer exist.

As in the 1920s, the Lebanon Woolen Mills expanded substantially in the 1930s, and by 1941 had made several significant additions, particularly at the south end of the mill on the south side of the railroad spur. To the west side of the mill, the owners added a small, one-story "chemical warehouse" by 1941, which was subsequently expanded to make the southwest corner of the building square. A more substantial addition was the one-story, brick carbonizing room attached north of the chemical warehouse and along the west side to the dye room, the wash and dry room, and the main mill. The carbonizing room ran northward until it met the tower and its attached shed. The carbonizing process strengthened the wool and, later (post-1953), acrylic fibers for longer-lasting fabric.

Also added to the main mill between 1929 and 1941 was a two-story structure that enclosed a space between the expanded napper room and the 1909 pump room. This new structure was a shop on the first floor and a "paper mill," which made paper labels for the blanket packaging, on the second.

In terms of square footage, the most extensive additions to the mill between 1929 and 1941 were on the south side of the mill, separated from the older complex by the railroad tracks. These changes included three separate buildings on the southwest corner of the mill complex, between the railroad tracks and Sinking Creek. The mill added a cinder block pipe shop for welding new pipes for the mill's steam systems or to replace old ones; a large coal bin to store coal for the boilers; and a "salt house."

Just after the war, in 1947, the mill erected its first formal office building, designed with restrained Colonial Revival elements seen in the porch and windows. The porch included a decorative, white-painted balustrade that survived at least until 1958 but was replaced at a later date with wrought iron. The new office provided space for sales people and office staff. The architect was Francis B. Warfield and Associates, the contractor H.L. Chenault and Son, the landscaper William C. Alford, and the interior designer Mrs. Alice Calgy. The interior of the general sales office included a checkerboard tile floor, and mill officials came to work in relatively plush offices with draperies and carpets.

Lebanon Woolen Mills was so proud of its new office that it held a dedication ceremony for the building on June 25, 1947. The pastor of the Lebanon Methodist Church, Reverend Sam Dodson, Jr., gave the invocation, and Lebanon Mayor Frank L. Buchanan and Tennessee Governor Jim McCord offered addresses.[69] Most impressive, however, was a visit by J.C. Penney, one of the largest buyers of blankets from the mill, and a close friend of John Edgerton, who died in 1938.

[69] Lebanon Woolen Mills, “Lebanon Woolen Mills Dedication Program.” June 25, 1947.

By 1958, on the mill's fiftieth anniversary, the mill had expanded to 120,000 square feet of floor space and an additional 42,000 square feet of storage space offsite.[70] Part of the new square footage was a major addition on the east side of the original 1909 mill. This addition was under construction c. 1955 and was complete by 1958, as shown in a c. 1958 photograph (below). By 1962, a large addition had been made to the eastern end of the mill complex. After 1962, and before 1972, numerous additions were made to the mill, causing it to spread outward in all directions. The final additions to the mill between 1962 and 1972 appeared along the southern side, all constructed of cinder block.

The Lebanon Woolen Mills still stands as an excellent example of early twentieth-century textile industry architecture, representing the changes to the industrial building as the textile industry evolved in the twentieth century. The mill building is extremely intact, and retains its industrial character through the original industrial windows, gabled and flat roofs, brick and concrete block walls, and the layout and growth of the building. The additions throughout the twentieth century blended with the earlier structures through their style and form and allowed for increased productivity of the mill operation.

Conclusion

The Lebanon Woolen Mills played an important role in the industrial history of Lebanon and Wilson County, and its president from 1914 to 1938, John E. Edgerton, was a significant local, statewide, and regional business leader. The largest employer in the city from 1909 until the 1960s, and one of the largest until it closed in 1998, the mill affected the lives of hundreds of local workers and businessmen, as well as their families and the community. Events at the mill reflected many of the larger trends in the southern textile industry, including management's relationship with the mill's labor force and the gradual decline and closing of the operation. Finally, the architecture of the mill and its surrounding landscape also reflect twentieth century industrialization in the South, revealing in its year-by-year expansion a fairly typical growth pattern for textile mills.

[70] *This is Lebanon Woolen Mills*, 35.

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description
The nominated property includes the approximately 11 acres north and east of Sinking Creek shown on the attached Wilson County Tax Map #68D, as a portion of parcel # 25. The property is bounded on the east by North Maple Street, on the south and west by Sinking Creek, and on the north by adjacent residential lot lines.

Verbal Boundary Justification
The nominated boundaries contain all of the acreage of Lebanon Woolen Mills north and east of Sinking Creek that was acquired gradually over the years from the first purchase of land for the mill in 1909. The nominated boundaries contain all of the extant and historical acreage associated with Lebanon Woolen Mills.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photos by: Elizabeth H. Moore
MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

Date: 31 January 2007

Digital Files: Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville, Tennessee

1 of 73 Lebanon Woolen Mills, office and mill building, facing west

2 of 73 Mill Building, east elevation sections 1C and 1A, facing west

3 of 73 Mill Building, east elevation section 1A, facing northwest

4 of 73 Mill Building, east elevation section 1A, facing southwest

5 of 73 Mill Building, east elevation section 1I, facing west

6 of 73 Mill Building, north and east elevation section 1C, facing southwest

7 of 73 Mill Building, north elevation section 1C, facing south

8 of 73 Mill Building, north elevation section 1D, facing south

9 of 73 Mill Building, detail section 1D north door, facing south

10 of 73 Mill Building, east elevation section 1H, facing west

11 of 73 Mill Building, east elevation section 1H and 1G, facing west

12 of 73 Mill Building, south elevation section 1G, facing northwest

13 of 73 Mill Building, east and south elevations section 1E and 1F, facing west

14 of 73 Mill Building, north elevation section 1I, facing southeast

15 of 73 Mill Building, west elevation sections 1I, 1A, 1B, facing east

16 of 73 Mill Building, west elevation section 1A, facing east

17 of 73 Mill Building, detail of water tower, facing southeast

18 of 73 Mill Building, west elevation section 1B, facing east

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

19 of 73 Mill Building, west elevation section 1B, facing northeast

20 of 73 Mill Building, south elevation sections 1B and 1C, facing northeast

21 of 73 Mill Building, north elevation section 1F, facing southeast

22 of 73 Mill Building, north elevation section 1F, facing southwest

23 of 73 Mill Building, west elevation section 1F, facing southeast

24 of 73 Mill Building interior, first floor section 1A, facing west through c. 1972 hall

25 of 73 Mill Building interior, first floor section 1A, facing east in c. 1972 space

26 of 73 Mill Building interior, first floor section 1A, facing east in c. 1972 space

27 of 73 Mill Building interior, first floor section 1A, facing south in c. 1962 space

28 of 73 Mill Building interior, first floor section 1A, facing southwest in c. 1909 space

29 of 73 Mill Building interior, first floor section 1A, facing north in c. 1909 space

30 of 73 Mill Building interior, first floor section 1A, detail of stairs in c. 1909 space, facing south

31 of 73 Mill Building interior, first floor section 1A, facing south in c. 1909 space

32 of 73 Mill Building interior, first floor section 1A, facing north in c. 1955 space

33 of 73 Mill Building interior, second floor section 1A, facing southeast in c. 1909 space

34 of 73 Mill Building interior, second floor section 1A, facing northwest in c. 1909 space

35 of 73 Mill Building interior, second floor section 1A, facing southwest in c. 1972 space

36 of 73 Mill Building interior, second floor section 1A, facing northeast in c. 1972 space

37 of 73 Mill Building interior, second floor section 1A, facing west in c. 1962 space

38 of 73 Mill Building interior, second floor section 1A, facing south in c. 1955 space

39 of 73 Mill Building interior, section 1C, facing south

40 of 73 Mill Building interior, section 1C, facing west

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41 of 73 Mill Building interior, detail section 1C door

42 of 73 Mill Building interior, section 1D, facing south

43 of 73 Mill Building interior, section 1D, facing east

44 of 73 Mill Building interior, section 1D, facing west

45 of 73 Mill Building interior, section 1E, facing west

46 of 73 Mill Building interior, section 1F, facing southeast

47 of 73 Mill Building interior, section 1G, facing southeast

48 of 73 Mill Building interior, section 1H, facing west

49 of 73 Mill Building interior, section 1H, facing north

50 of 73 Mill Building interior, section 1I, facing north

51 of 73 Mill Building interior, section 1I, facing southeast

52 of 73 Mill Building interior, section 1I, facing southwest

53 of 73 Coal Storage Building, north elevation, facing southeast

54 of 73 Coal Storage Building, east elevation, facing west

55 of 73 Office, east façade, facing west

56 of 73 Office, east entrance, facing west

57 of 73 Office, east façade and south elevation, facing northwest

58 of 73 Office, south elevation, facing north

59 of 73 Office, south elevation, facing north

60 of 73 Office, south and west elevations, facing northeast

61 of 73 Office, west elevation, facing east

62 of 73 Office, west elevation, facing east

63 of 73 Office, west and north elevations, facing southeast

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64 of 73 Office, north elevation, facing south

65 of 73 Office, north elevation, facing south

66 of 73 Office, interior, reception space, facing west

67 of 73 Office, interior, hallway, facing north

68 of 73 Office, interior, conference space, facing west

69 of 73 Office, interior, detail of typical door

70 of 73 Office, interior, detail of ceiling

71 of 73 Blanket storage building, east elevation, facing west

72 of 73 Blanket storage building, south and west elevations, facing northeast

73 of 73 Lebanon Woolen Mills residential neighborhood, facing north on North Maple Street

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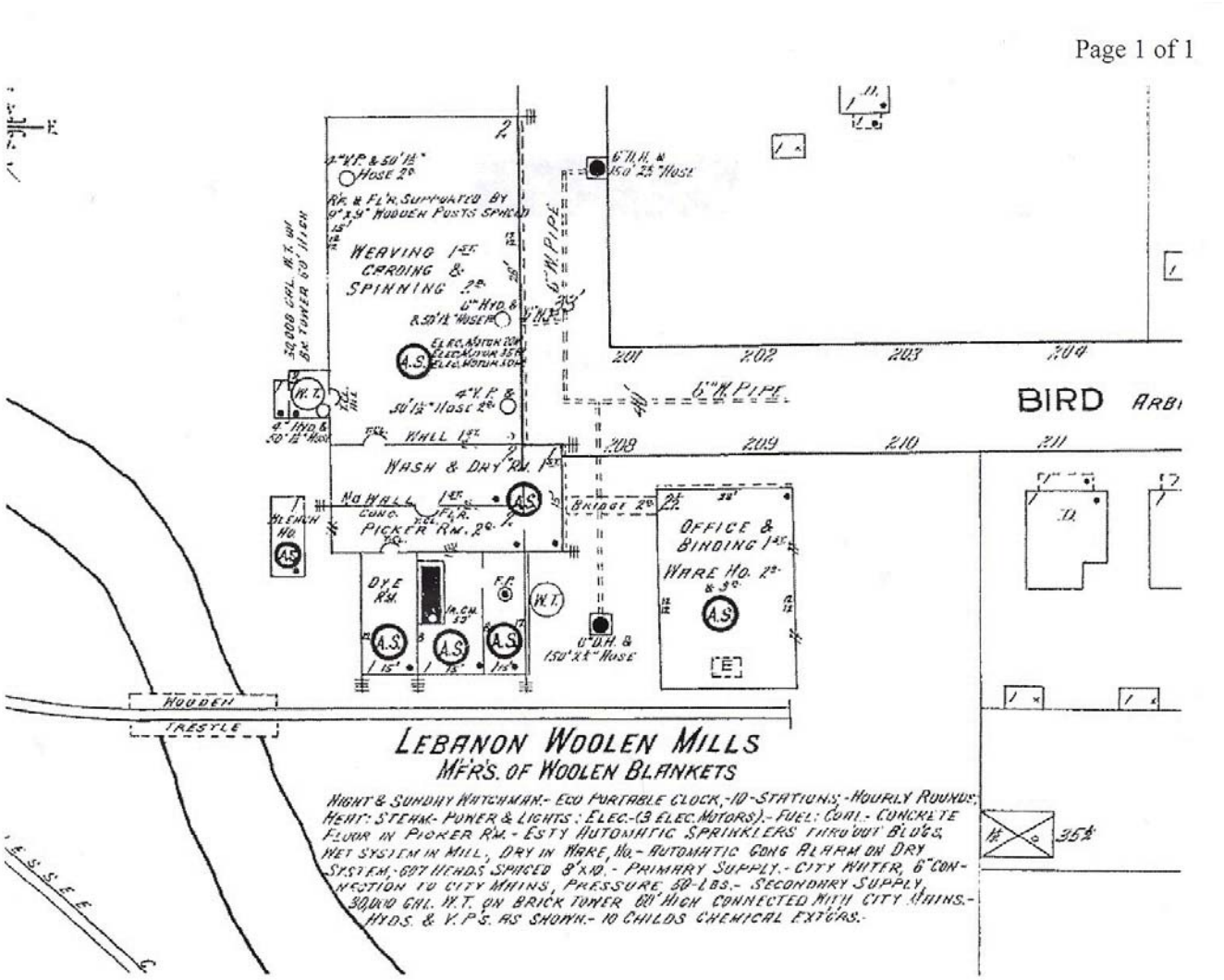
Lebanon Woolen Mills
Wilson County, Tennessee



1913 Sanborn

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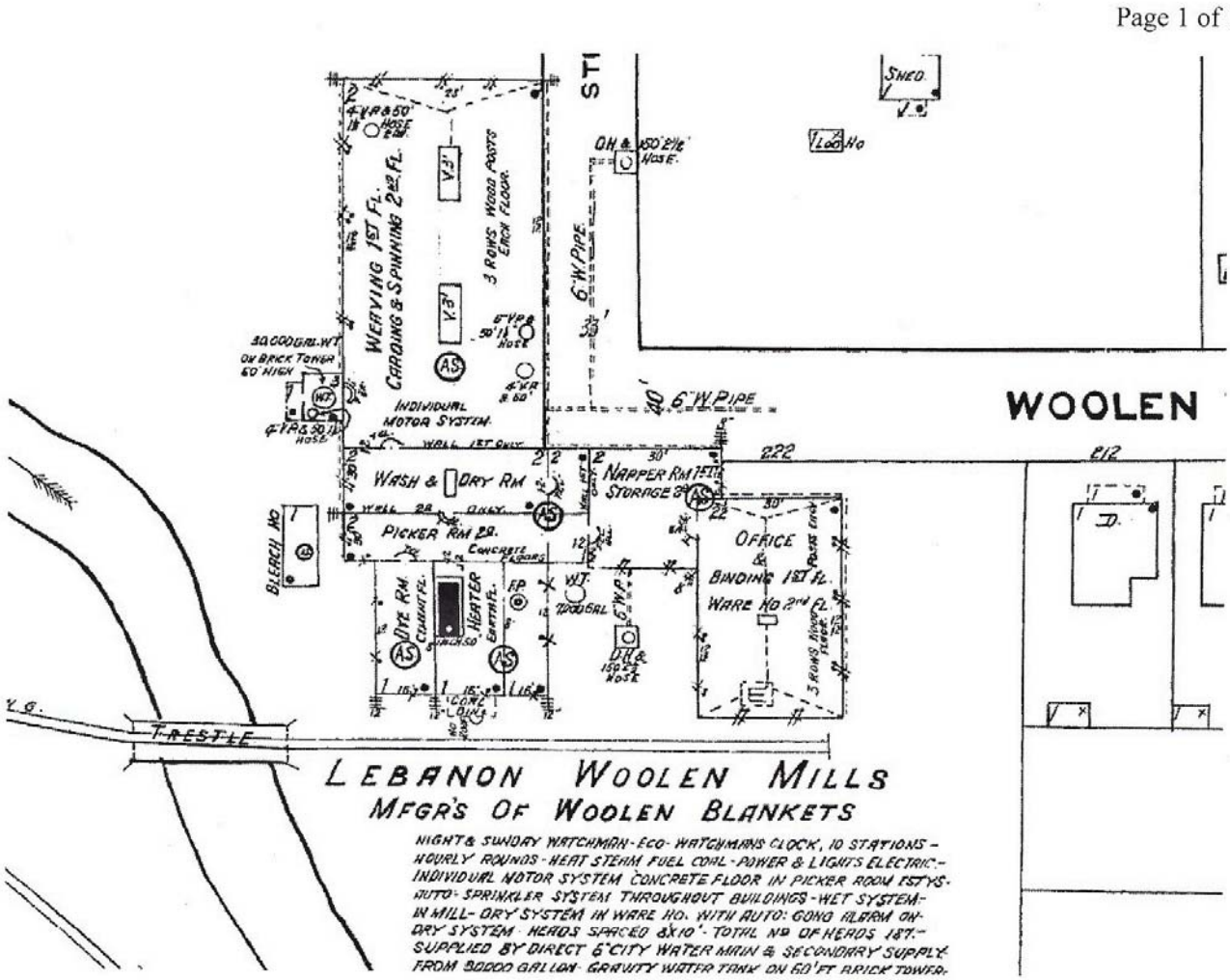
Lebanon Woolen Mills
Wilson County, Tennessee



1920 Sanborn

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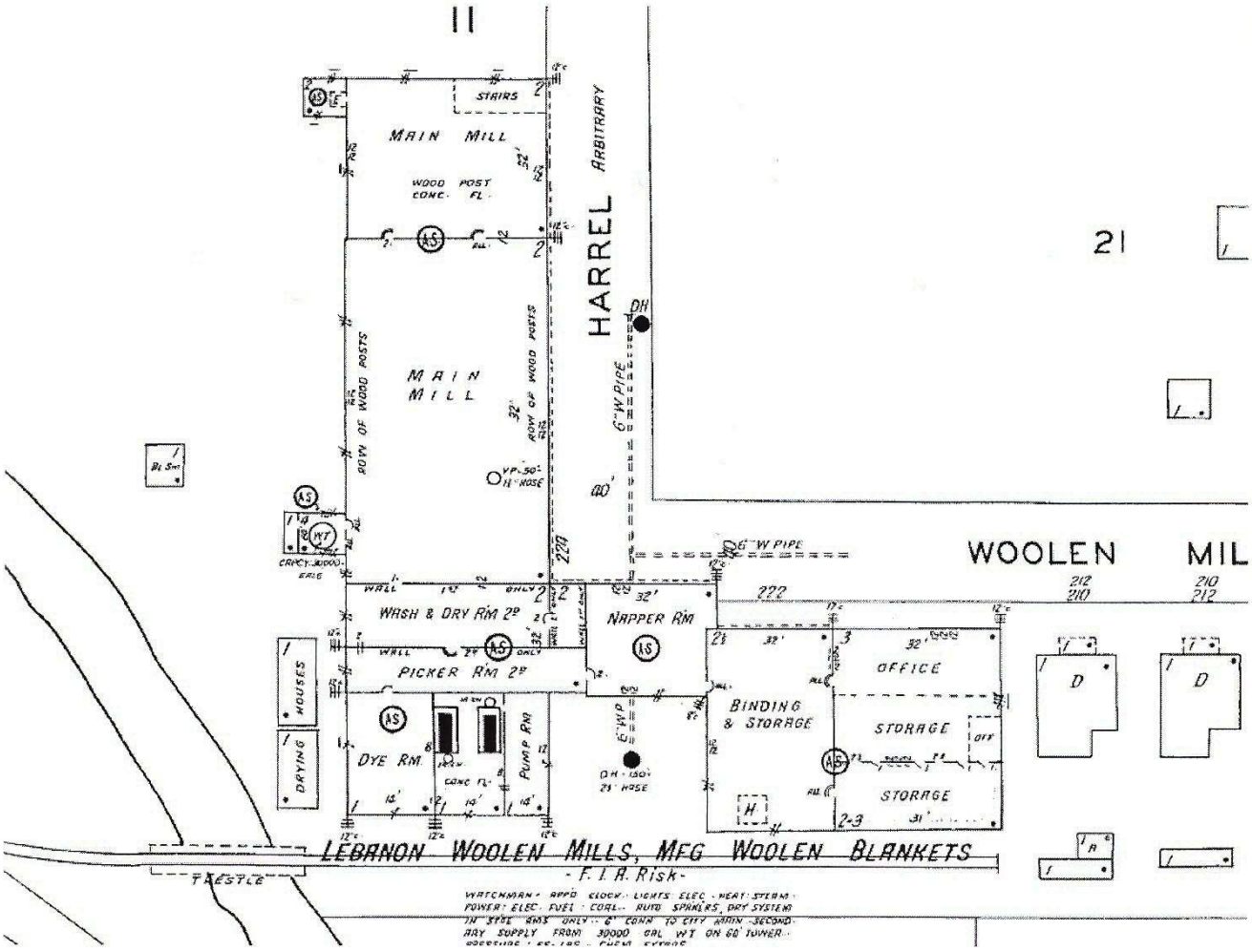
Lebanon Woolen Mills
Wilson County, Tennessee



1929 Sanborn

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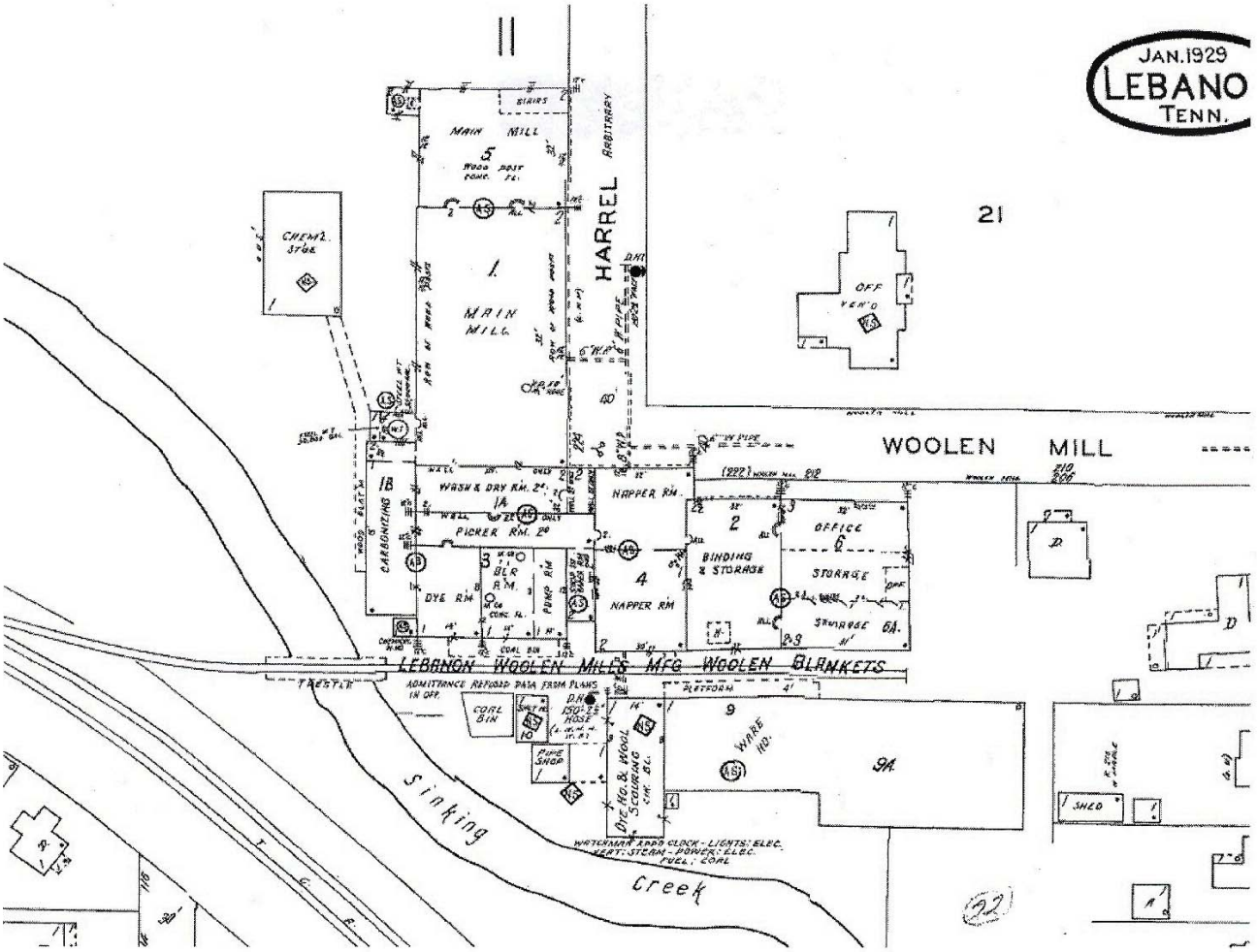
Lebanon Woolen Mills
Wilson County, Tennessee



1947 Sanborn (update of 1929)

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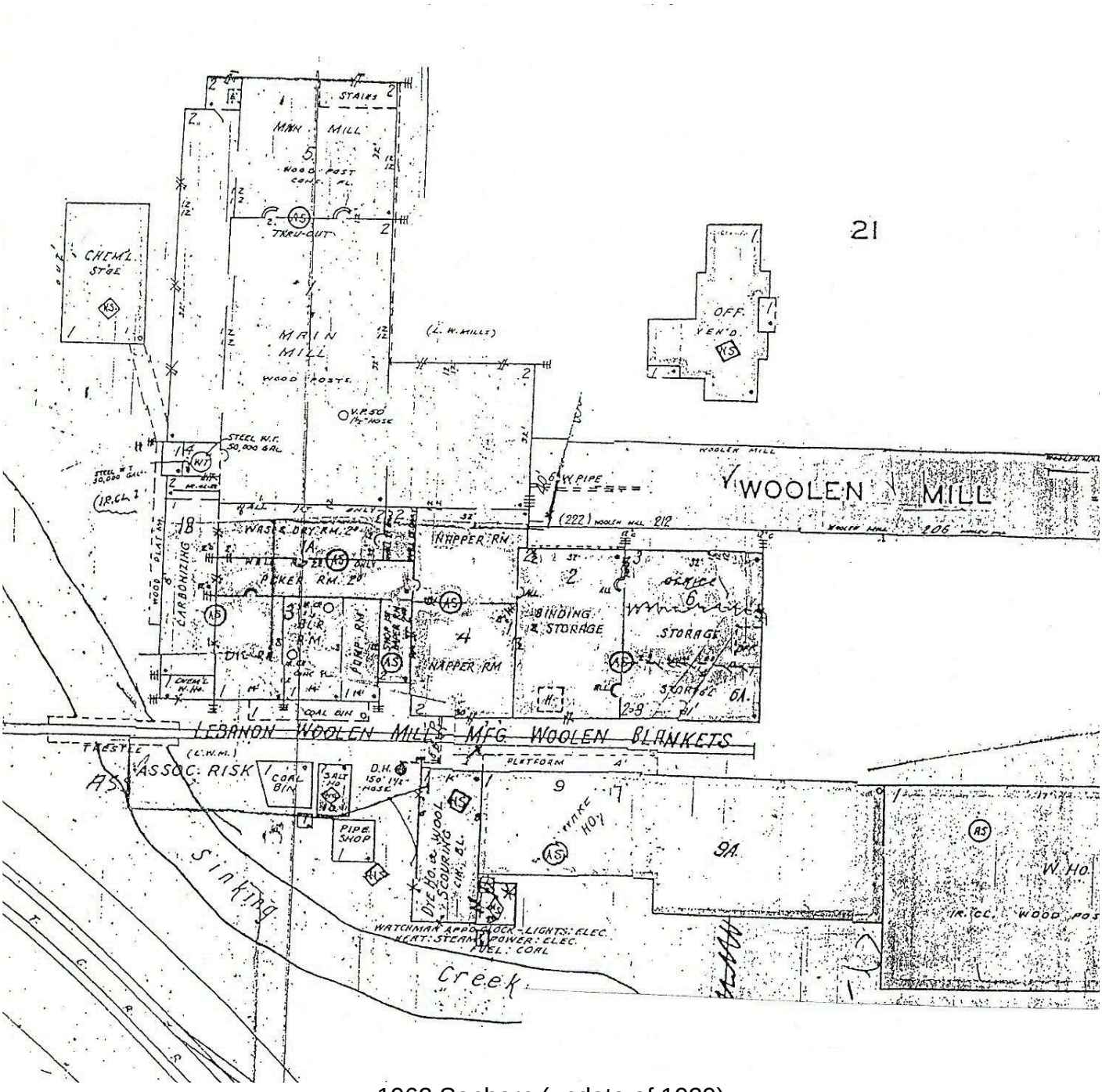
Lebanon Woolen Mills
Wilson County, Tennessee



1962 Sanborn (update of 1929)

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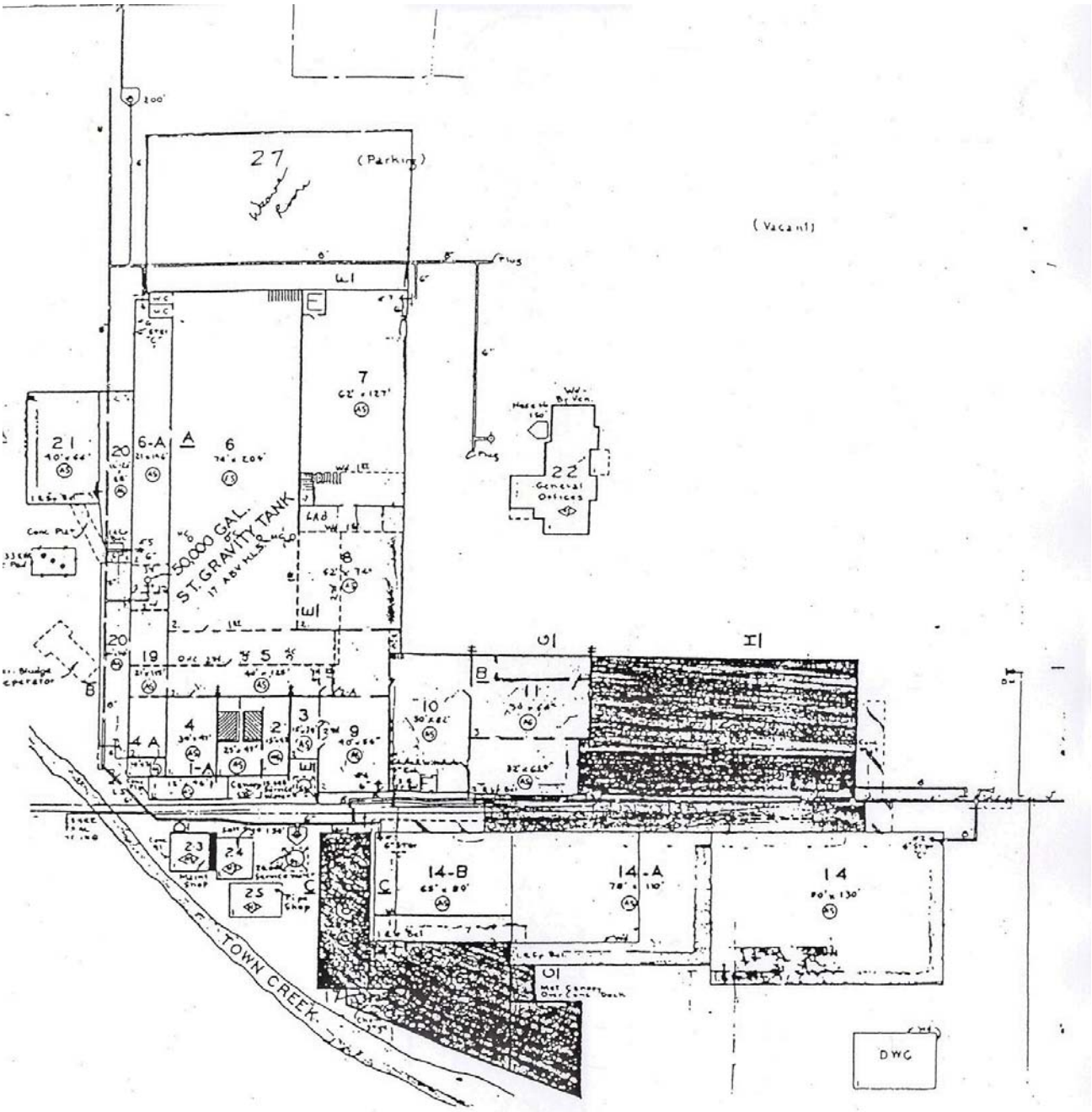

1972 Mill Plan

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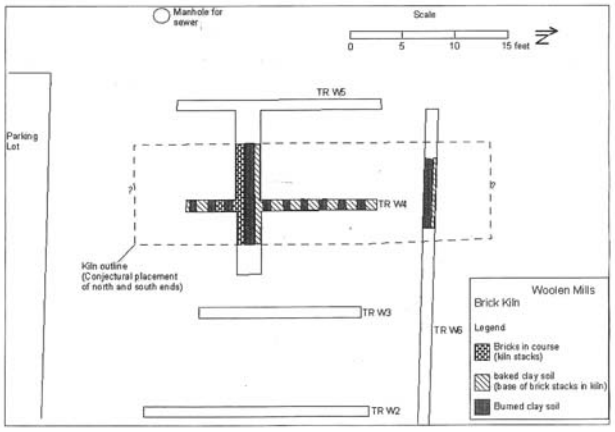
Appendix – Archaeological research - Site number 40WI187.

In 2004 TRC undertook an archaeological study on the northwest corner of the mill property for a proposed commuter rail station. Archival research and backhoe trenching were completed. The area was once occupied by worker housing for the mill. Eight trenches at the site found no remains of housing and only a scattering of household artifacts. A brick kiln was found at the site. The study of the area by TRC determined that this kiln was used to make bricks for the woolen mill buildings, that it was a common type, and that the remains were not eligible for listing in the National Register.

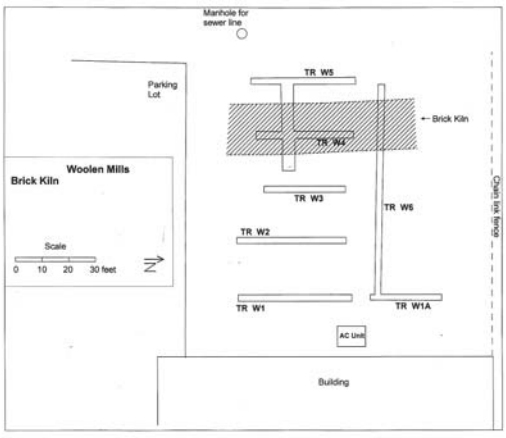
The brick kiln was a scove kiln or brick clamp type that was used for the 1909 buildings. There was a light scattering of early to mid-twentieth century household artifacts mixed with the kiln remains. Trenches showed combinations of loam, coal, brick, under fired brick, burned clay, and various household artifacts such as bottles and ceramics. At trench TR W4 there were two lines of under fired bricks, three bricks wide that formed the supports for the kiln. The rest of the kiln had been dismantled.

Finding of the kiln was unexpected and TRC's research showed that the kiln as a temporary, single-use facility.

Information and plans from "Phase I/II Evaluation of the Proposed Lebanon Station, East Corridor of the Nashville Commuter Rail System, City of Lebanon, Wilson County, Tennessee" prepared by TRC, Nashville. Report authored by Larry McKee, Ted Karpynec, and Jared Barrett in October 2004.



Brick kiln plan view



Plan view of trenches

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